



Healthy Holiday Celebrations - Winter



Planning celebrations? Preparing festive snacks? Making holiday crafts? Finding time to plan ways for children to stay active while in child care can be challenging during the holiday season. But there are plenty of ways that you can keep kids moving during the holidays.

Here are some of our favorite activities that give children opportunities to move and play.

- 1. Ask children to act out holiday stories that you read together:** Do you read holiday stories aloud with children? Next time, ask children to move like the characters or animals in the book.
- 2. Dance to holiday music:** Turn on a holiday radio station or play a holiday CD and let children dance to the songs. Want to turn it into a game? Stop the music and have children freeze in the position they are in when the music stops. Then, start the music again.
- 3. Have children help put up (and put away) holiday decorations:** Have holiday decorations that you need to put up? Have children help you hang up paper snowflakes, string garland, and place holiday decorations around your classroom or home. When it's time to take them down, place a box in the middle of the room, and let children help you pick up, fold, and organize the decorations in the box.
- 4. Play in the snow:** Build a snowman. Teach children how to make small snowballs. Create a line in the snow with rocks or sticks nearby and have children try to throw the snowballs over the line, or place a bucket a few feet away and see if they can get the snowballs into the bucket. Divide children into teams, and have a contest. Don't get snow in your area? Use small bean bags or balls.
- 5. Have a scavenger hunt indoors or outdoors:** Choose a brightly colored object, such as an orange or small ball. Hide it and let children run around while they search for it. If the space is not large enough to allow kids to run, ask them to hop while they search for the object.

These are just a few ideas to get you thinking. Be creative and think of new ways that you can incorporate physical activity into your program. Not only will children have fun being physically active, they will also be healthier as a result. In fact, research shows that there are many benefits to daily physical activity, including improved fitness, heart health, healthy bone development, and improved sense of well-being.

Are you providing opportunities for children to be physically active during this holiday season? Share your story. As you celebrate the holiday season and provide opportunities for children to be active, take note of your activities. Your story can help to inspire providers around the country. We encourage you to share your story (and pictures!) with us by sending an email to LMCCStories@cdc.gov. Your child care program may be featured in a future blog or on the *Let's Move!* Child Care website created and hosted by Nemours (www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org).

Happy holidays!
Let's Move! Child Care



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